

ROUTINE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/LR

REVIEWED by John KelleyDATE 4/28/89

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FOI EO or PA exemptions

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E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MOPS, ETRD, PINR, AF, LR

SUBJECT: MONTHLY ROAD SECURITY REPORT: SEPTEMBER 1987

REF: KABUL 1650 (NOTAL)

1. FOR ISLAMABAD AND NEW DELHI: POSTS MAY WISH TO DRAW UPON THE FOLLOWING IN THEIR REGULAR BRIEFINGS TO PRESS.

2. SUMMARY: KABUL AND KANDAHAR RESIDENTS THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER, OBSERVED A MUJAHIDIN INJUNCTION AGAINST USE OF THE KABUL TO KANDAHAR ROAD. MEANWHILE REPORTS OF MUJAHIDIN ATTACKS/AMBUSHES ON THE ROUTE INCREASED OVER THOSE REPORTED IN AUGUST. THE SALANG CONTINUED TO EXPERIENCE PERIODIC CLOSURES DURING THE MONTH THOUGH THE DISRUPTIONS WERE LESS FREQUENT AND NOT OF AS LONG DURATION AS REPORTED IN AUGUST. MUJAHIDIN

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ATTACKS ON THE LOGAR ROAD INCREASED IN SEPTEMBER WITH A PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE MUJAHIDIN ATTACK AGAINST A LARGE SOVIET COLUMN REPORTED AT THE END OF THE MONTH. LOCAL SOURCES HAVE IDENTIFIED SEVERAL MUJAHIDIN AREAS OF STRENGTH ALONG THE KANDAHAR TO HERAT ROAD. THE JALALABAD ROAD IN SEPTEMBER REMAINED OPEN WITH NO MUJAHIDIN ATTACKS/AMBUSHES REPORTED. IN THE NORTHEAST, A MAJOR SOVIET COLUMN CARVED A WIDE SWATH OF DESTRUCTION ALONG MUCH OF THE ROUTE LINKING KUNDUZ AND FAYZARAD. THE MAZAR-I-SHARIF TO SHEHERGAN ROAD IS UNDER DIVIDED CONTROL. MUJAHIDIN REPORTEDLY INFLECTED HEAVY LOSSES ON A MIXED SOVIET/DRA CONVOY ON THIS ROUTE EARLY IN THE MONTH. THE PANJSHIR ROAD WAS CLOSED DURING PART OF THE MONTH. ROADS IN THE PAGHMAN AREA ARE SUBJECT TO DAY AND NIGHT ATTACK AS THE MUJAHIDIN CONSOLIDATED CONTROL OF THE PLAINS WEST OF KARGHA LAKE. THE ROAD LEADING WEST FROM KABUL TO THE HAZARAJAT REMAINS UNDER FIRM MUJAHIDIN CONTROL. SOVIET FORCES HAVE INSTALLED NEW DEFENSIVE POSITIONS ON KABUL CITY'S PERIMETER ROAD. IN KANDAHAR, SOVIET AND DRA FORCES HAVE NOT YET COMPLETED THE NEW RING ROAD BEGUN EARLIER IN THE SUMMER. END SUMMARY.

3. KABUL-KANDAHAR ROAD: BEGINNING APPROXIMATELY SEPTEMBER 8, THE KABUL TO KANDAHAR ROAD WAS CLOSED TO MOST COMMERCIAL AND OTHER PRIVATE TRAFFIC AS AFGHANS OBSERVED A MUJAHIDIN WARNING NOT TO USE THE ROAD. DURING THE MONTH, KANDAHARIS REPORTED CONSISTENTLY THAT NO PRIVATE TRUCKERS AND BUSES WERE MOVING NORTH. WHILE SOME BUSES OPERATING FROM KABUL VENTURED AS FAR AS GHAZNI, OBSERVATION AT THE KABUL TERMINUS OF THE ROAD INDICATED TRAFFIC FROM KABUL SOUTH ALSO WAS MUCH REDUCED. VARIOUS SOURCES ASCRIBED THE ROAD CLOSURE TO MUJAHIDIN MINING OF THE ROAD AND/OR INTENSIFIED FIGHTING ALONG THE ROAD, PARTICULARLY IN THE SHAJUY AREA OF NORTHERN ZABOL PROVINCE, SITE OF A MAJOR SOVIET BASE. REPORTS OF MUJAHIDIN AMBUSHES ALONG THE ROUTE ROSE FROM TWO IN AUGUST TO FIVE IN SEPTEMBER: -- ON SEPTEMBER 5, MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED A DRA CONVOY JUST NORTH OF GHAZNI CITY WOUNDING 25 DRA TROOPS. MUJAHIDIN REPORTEDLY SUFFERED NO CASUALTIES. -- MUJAHIDIN AMBUSHED A SOVIET-DRA CONVOY AT DASHT-I-KHO SEPTEMBER 23, KILLING THREE AND CAPTURING SEVEN OR EIGHT. -- ON SEPTEMBER 27, MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED A SOVIET COLUMN AT KOTALI TAKHT (34°25'N 68°54'E) DESTROYING ONE ARMORED VEHICLE. -- IN A SEPTEMBER 28 ATTACK ON A DRA CONVOY NEAR GHAZNI CITY APPROXIMATELY 100 DRA TROOPS REPORTEDLY SURRENDERED. ON THE SAME DAY, MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED A DRA SUPPLY CONVOY AT TOURGAN CAPTURING TWO FOOD TRUCKS. REPORTEDLY 12 DRA TROOPS SURRENDERED AND ONE WAS KILLED.

4. THE SALANG ROAD: OBSERVATIONS BY DIPLOMATS AND RELIABLE AFGHAN REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE SALANG ROAD WAS CLOSED TO TRAFFIC ON AT LEAST FOUR DAYS (SEPTEMBER 21, 23, 24 AND 26). WHILE MOST OF THESE CLOSURES WERE CAUSED BY FIGHTING, THE SEPTEMBER 24 CLOSURE RESULTED FROM MOVEMENT OF A MAJOR SOVIET COLUMN FROM THE NORTHEAST TO ITS KABUL BASE. TRAVELLERS REPORT THAT THE SALANG IS IN REASONABLY GOOD REPAIR AS FAR NORTH AS

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CHARIKAR (CAPITAL OF PARWAN PROVINCE). ONLY ONE MAJOR
MUJAHIDIN AMBUSH WAS REPORTED DURING THE MONTH. MUJAHIDIN
REPORTEDLY ATTACKED A SOVIET CONVOY AT ANTIRAN NEAR THE SALANG
TUNNEL, SEPTEMBER 28, DESTROYING THREE TANKS. A TRAVELLER
REPORTED SEEING THE SMOKING WRECKAGE OF THE TANKS.

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5. THE LOGAR ROAD: SOURCES CONTEND THAT THE LOGAR ROAD SOUTH OF KABUL (BUT STILL WITHIN KABUL PROVINCE) IS IN THE HANDS OF THE MUJAHIDIN AFTER SUNSET. MUJAHIDIN ACTION ALONG THE LOGAR ROAD INCREASED DURING THE MONTH UP FROM A SINGLE ATTACK REPORTED IN AUGUST TO FOUR IN SEPTEMBER:
-- ON SEPTEMBER 9, MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED A GARDEZ-BOUND CONVOY AT KOLANGAR, NORTH OF PUL-I-ALAM, DESTROYING THREE ARMORED VEHICLES. THE FIGHTING BLOCKED TRAFFIC ON THE ROAD FOR THE DAY.
-- MUJAHIDIN ON SEPTEMBER 13, AMBUSHED A DRA CONVOY IN THE MOHAMMAD AGHA DISTRICT DAMAGING OR DESTROYING THREE TO FOUR ARMORED VEHICLES.
-- ON SEPTEMBER 22, A SOVIET HELICOPTER ATTACKED A CIVILIAN BUS AT KHOVOSHI (34°01'N 69°14'E) KILLING 16 AND WOUNDING 17 PASSENGERS.
-- ON SEPTEMBER 29, ACCORDING TO MULTIPLE SOURCES, MUJAHIDIN AMBUSHED A MAJOR SOVIET CONVOY NORTH OF PUL-I-ALAM, PUTTING 20

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TO 25 ARMORED AND OTHER VEHICLES OUT OF ACTION. THE CONVOY, WHICH DIPLOMATS HAD OBSERVED LEAVING KABUL, CONTAINED MANY 5-62 TANKS AND OTHER ARMORED VEHICLES.

6. HERAT TO KANDAHAR ROAD: TRAVELLERS REPORT THAT IN SEPTEMBER, THE TRIP FROM KANDAHAR TO HERAT BY ROAD REQUIRED TWO TO THREE OVERNIGHTS STOPS WITH MUJAHIDIN IN STRONG CONCENTRATIONS AT KHRISHK AND ALSMAGAC (BOTH PHONETIC). DRA FORCES HOLD A STRONG POSITION AT KESHAHAUD. AN UNTESTED SOURCE SAID THAT DURING THE MONTH, MUJAHIDIN AMBUSHED A CONVOY AT ARABAH SAIDA NEAR HERAT CITY DESTROYING TWO ARMORED VEHICLES. A TRAVELLER REPORTED SOVIET ARMOR PERMANENTLY POSITIONED ALONG THE ROAD BETWEEN THE HERAT AIRPORT AND THE CITY WITH THEIR GUNS POINTED GENERALLY WESTWARD.

7. THE JALALABAD ROAD: MUJAHIDIN REPORTEDLY CONTROL THE LATABAN AREA (34°30'N 69°24'E) IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF THE JALALABAD ROAD. FOR THE SECOND STRAIGHT MONTH, THERE WERE NO REPORTS OF MUJAHIDIN OPERATIONS AGAINST CONVOYS ON THE ROAD.

8. MAJOR ROADS IN NORTHEAST AFGHANISTAN: A MAJOR SOVIET-DRA ARMORED CONVOY WHICH PUSHED EAST ALONG THE EAST-WEST ROAD CONNECTING MAZAR-I-SHARIF AND FAYZABAD THROUGH MUCH OF SEPTEMBER, REPORTEDLY DESTROYED MANY BUILDINGS AND VEGETATION ALONG THE ROUTE WITH RECON-BY-FIRE TACTICS AND DELIBERATE DESTRUCTION OF ANYTHING THAT MIGHT GIVE MUJAHIDIN COVER. MUJAHIDIN REPORTEDLY HARASSED THE SLOW MOVING CONVOY WHICH LEFT SOME NEW POSTS IN ITS WAKE. THE COLUMN WAS SUPPORTED BY AIR STRIKES AT SOME POINTS. SEPARATELY, TRAVELLERS REPORT THAT A TRIP FROM KABUL TO KUNDUZ, WHICH USED TO REQUIRE FOUR TO SIX HOURS, NOW TAKES TEN HOURS. REPORTEDLY, MUCH OF THE PAVEMENT ALONG THE ROUTE HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY TRACKED VEHICLE TRAFFIC.

9. SHEBERGAN TO MAZAR-I-SHARIF ROAD: A TRAVELLER REPORTS THAT THOUGH IN POOR CONDITION THE ROAD CONNECTING THE TWO CITIES IS PASSABLE. THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY TEN SOVIET AND DRA CHECKPOINTS ON THE ROUTE WHILE MUJAHIDIN CHECKPOINTS TEND TO BE MOBILE. ACCORDING TO AN AFGHAN SOURCE FROM THE AREA, DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER, MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED A SOVIET/DRA CONVOY AT TIMURAK (36°45'N 66°35'E) DESTROYING 45 VEHICLES.

10. PANJSHIR ROAD: A RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTED THAT IN MID-SEPTEMBER THE PANJSHIR ROAD NORTH OF TAKAH NAJAGHAW HAD BEEN CLOSED TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC.

11. MAIDAN SHAR TO THE HAZARAJAT: CONSISTENT REPORTING DURING SEPTEMBER INDICATED STRONG MUJAHIDIN CONTROL OF THE HAZARAJAT ROAD WEST OF MAIDAN SHAR. DEPLOYMENT OF MAJOR SOVIET AND DRA UNITS TO MAIDAN SHAR IN SUPPORT OF EFFORTS TO PUSH WEST RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT SOVIET AND DRA LOSSES DURING THE MONTH.

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RUECBIA/CDR513THMIGP FT MCNMOUTH NJ//IAM-IC-C//

RHCGSRB/COMUSARCENT FT MCPHERSON GA//AFRO-DSO//

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RUSBPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 3019

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12. KABUL AREA ROADS: FIGHTING IN THE PAGHMAN AREA CAUSED THE KABUL TO PAGHMAN ROAD (WEST OF KARGHA LAKE) TO BE CLOSED SEPTEMBER 1-4. LATER IN THE MONTH, MUJAHIDIN MINING OF THE ROADS IN THE PLAINS BETWEEN KARGHA LAKE AND PAGHMAN EFFECTIVELY BLOCKED MOST TRANSPORT IN THE AREA. MOST OF THE ROADS WEST OF KARGHA LAKE NOW ARE SUBJECT TO MUJAHIDIN ATTACK DURING THE DAY AS WELL AS AT NIGHT. AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER SOVIET FORCES BEGAN ESTABLISHMENT OF THREE NEW WELL-DEFENDED POSTS ON PERIMETER ROAD, THE ROAD WHICH ARCS AROUND KABUL ON THE NORTH AND EAST. THE POSTS, EACH SUPPORTED BY ARMORED VEHICLES, OPERATE BOOMS WHICH CONTROL TRAFFIC ON THE ROAD AND ARE DEFENDED AGAINST GROUND ATTACK BY BARBED AND CONCERTINA WIRE.

13. KANDAHAR AREA ROADS: TRAVELLERS FROM KANDAHAR REPORT THAT SOVIET/DRA FORCES HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE RING-DEFENSE ROAD ENCIRCLING THE CITY, WHICH WAS BEGUN EARLIER IN THE SUMMER.

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SOME PORTIONS OF THE RING ROAD THAT ARE COMPLETE AT NIGHT SLIP
UNDER MUJAHIDIN CONTROL. SOVIET/DRA FORCES HAVE COMPLETED THE
ROADS SPOKING IN FROM THE RING TO THE CENTER OF KANDAHAR
CITY. GLASSMAN

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